

CALL TO ACTION FOR BETTER DATA ON INTERNALLY DISPLACED CHILDREN AND YOUTH

CONCEPT NOTE

Children and their families are sometimes forced to leave their home because of conflict or violence, disasters, climate change or other reasons. Although refugees often make the headlines, twice as many displaced people remain within the borders of their own country. Globally, there were 41 million internally displaced people (IDPs) in 2018 because of conflict or violence alone.

The exact number of children and youth living in internal displacement is unknown. We estimate that over 17 million children under the age of 18 and 5 million youth aged 18 to 24 are internally displaced worldwide because of conflict or violence, and millions more because of disasters and other causes. Together, children and young adults make up for at least 55 per cent of all IDPs worldwide.

Without basic demographic information on IDPs, it is not possible to plan for adequate support and protection. Internally displaced children and youth are twice invisible in global and national data. First, because compared to people forced to leave their home who cross an international border, those who remain in their home country are largely unaccounted for, partly because of methodological challenges but also lack of attention and resources. Second, information on age exists only very limited for any displaced population, but even more so for persons in internal displacement. Only 14% of the countries and territories with data on conflict-related IDPs disaggregate the data by age.

Yet the consequences of displacement, if unaddressed, can last for a lifetime, especially when it interrupts education and limits future opportunities. In 2018, over 6.2 million girls and 6.4 million boys of primary and secondary school age were estimated to be living in internal displacement due to conflict and violence. Meanwhile, information on their access to school and on the quality of the education they receive is nearly inexistent, although we know that these children are highly vulnerable and often lack access to education.

With this call to action, UNICEF and the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) are inviting other partners to join forces to improve data collection, analysis, dissemination and use on internally displaced children and youth, on their living conditions and on their needs. We aim to make concerted efforts to improve the interoperability of data and pool our resources together to draw on the wide range of sources, from official statistics to big data, to better inform policies and interventions aimed at protecting and supporting internally displaced children and youth. If you are interested in joining the partnership, please contact UNICEF and IDMC focal points below.

CONTACT INFORMATION

UNICEF: Danzhen You, Senior Demographer, Division of Data, Research and Policy, dyou@unicef.org

IDMC: Bina Desai, Head of Policy and Research, bina.desai@idmc.ch